



U . S . S E N A T O R
ROGER F. WICKER

Report on Health Care

[HTTP://WWW.WICKER.SENATE.GOV](http://www.wicker.senate.gov)

SUMMER 2009



Dear fellow Mississippians,

I believe the ongoing debate over health care is headed in the wrong direction. Americans do not want – nor do they deserve – a government takeover of their health care. Unfortunately, that is what the proposals currently before Congress would do.

Congress must decide between two approaches – one that would reform our health care system by cutting costs, expanding coverage, and allowing patients to keep their current doctors, or one that involves a costly Washington-run health care system. I am opposed to a government-run system in America, and I am working hard to ensure such a plan is not implemented.

This is an increasingly pivotal debate, the outcome of which will have a huge impact on the lives of every Mississippian. There is much to be lost if Congress takes the wrong approach. This newsletter will provide you an update on where I stand on this important issue, as well as additional information on the legislation currently before Congress.

Sincerely,

Roger F. Wicker
United States Senate

Sen. Wicker Opposes Government-Takeover Plan

Observers of the health care debate before Congress realize it has come down to a competition between two different philosophies: those who think the government ought to be the primary sponsor of almost everything – including America's health care system – and those who believe government has no business running our nation's health care system.

Sen. Wicker subscribes to the latter philosophy. He strongly opposes any government takeover plan that will put a bureaucrat between you and your doctor.

To get a better idea of the consequences of such a scheme, one only needs to look at the government-run health systems in two of our closest allies, Canada and Great Britain. Canadian and British patients wait about twice as long – sometimes over a year – to see a specialist. More than 800,000 people currently are waiting for some sort of procedure in Canada, while 1.8 million patients in England are waiting for a hospital admission or outpatient treatment.

Sen. Wicker believes that a Washington takeover of health care would result in similar results for patients in our country. That is not the direction America wants to go.



Sen. Roger Wicker discusses health care reform at a recent Senate hearing

Principles for Reform

Sen. Roger Wicker wants to see health care reform enacted, but only if it is done correctly. The following are principles he believes are essential to successful reform:

- 1 **Focus on prevention, wellness, and early detection.**
- 2 **Allow those happy with their current coverage to keep it.**
- 3 **Protect the doctor-patient relationship by prohibiting bureaucrats from making health care decisions.**
- 4 **Act in a fiscally responsible way – no tax increases or additional borrowing and spending.**

Using those principles as a guide, here is a breakdown of where Sen. Wicker stands on the current health care debate:

What Sen. Wicker is For:

- ✓ Making health care more affordable for everyone
- ✓ Giving every American the same tax break big companies get to purchase health coverage, regardless of their work situation
- ✓ Allowing individuals to purchase health insurance across state lines to save money
- ✓ Giving every American the same types of choices Senators, Representatives, and other federal employees get
- ✓ Allowing small employers to band together in associated health plans in order to give them the same purchasing power as large corporations



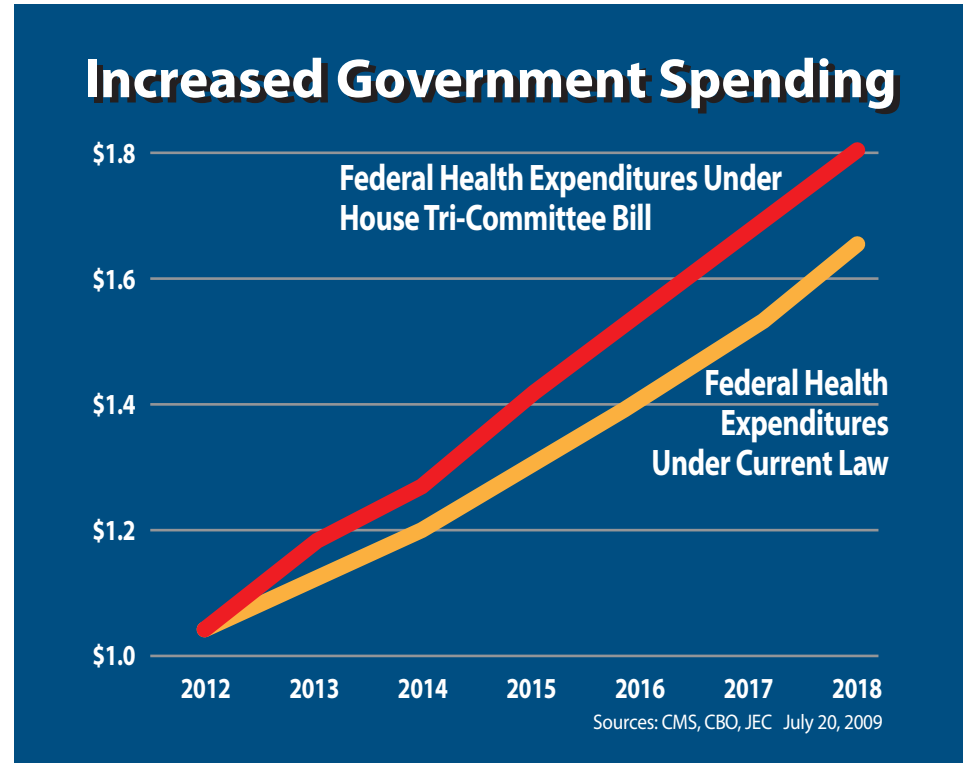
What Sen. Wicker Opposes:

- ✗ Increasing the cost of health care in America
- ✗ Cutting Medicare to fund a new government program
- ✗ Dismantling the good parts of our system that attract patients from around the world to U.S. medical centers
- ✗ Pushing people out of their health plans and into a government-run “single-payer” system
- ✗ Limiting treatment options available to patients and their families

Plans Fail to Rein in Government Spending

One of the more troubling aspects of the health care proposals before Congress is the cost to taxpayers. The American public is increasingly worried about the massive debt we are accumulating - and for good reason. Our annual budget deficit this year alone is expected to reach a staggering \$1.6 trillion.

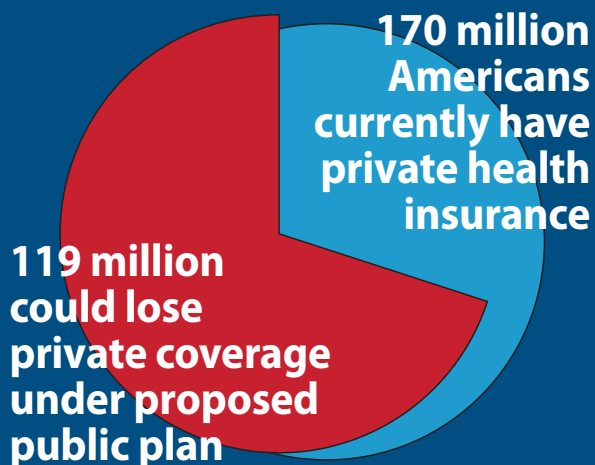
In response to this massive borrowing, the last thing we should do is add hundreds of billions in more debt. Yet that is exactly the direction current health care legislation is headed. In the Senate, the draft proposal will cost taxpayers at least \$1 trillion. The House plan is expected to cost between \$1 trillion and \$1.6 trillion. President Obama has repeatedly said he would not sign a bill that does not control health care costs. The plans before Congress



clearly fail this important test. As the corresponding graph shows, rather than decreasing health care spending by the federal government,

current legislation actually increases spending.

70% Could Lose Private Insurance



Source: Lewin Group

Government Health Option is Bait-and-Switch Tactic

Equally as troubling as the cost of current health care legislation is the inclusion of the so-called “government plan,” or “public option,” which would create a government insurer to compete against private insurers.

This idea represents a classic bait-and-switch tactic, as supporters claim a public plan would only provide more options for consumers. In reality, a public plan would kill the private insurance market, forcing millions of Americans currently happy with their health insurance to a government-run plan.

A recent study by the nonpartisan Lewin Group found that the enactment of a public insurance plan could lead to nearly 120 million people losing their private health insurance.

Senator Wicker and His Office Can Help You

I always look forward to hearing from Mississippians, whether they want to share their thoughts about a particular issue or if they need help with an agency of the federal government. Please feel free to contact me by phone, mail, or email.

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